

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A precipitated silica having the following physico-chemical characteristics:

pH (5% in water) (ISO 787-9)		3 – 8
BET surface area (DIN 66131)	(m ² /g)	400 – 600
DBP absorption value (DIN 53601, in relation to dried substance)	(g/100 g)	≥380 – 420
Tapped density (ISO 787-11)	(g/l)	100 – 200
ALPINE sieve residue > 63μ (ISO 8130-1)	(%)	0.1 - 40

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The precipitated silica according to Claim 1, which has the following physico-chemical characteristics:

pH (5% in water) (ISO 787-9)		3 – 8
BET surface area (DIN 66131)	(m ² /g)	400 – 600
DBP absorption value (DIN 53601, in relation to dried substance)	(g/100 g)	≥380 – 420
Tapped density (ISO 787-11)	(g/l)	140 – 200
ALPINE sieve residue > 63μ (ISO 8130-1)	(%)	10 - 40

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The precipitated silica according to Claim 1, which has the following physico-chemical characteristics:

pH (5% in water) (ISO 787-9)		3 – 8
BET surface area (DIN 66131)	(m ² /g)	400 – 600
DBP absorption value (DIN 53601, in relation to dried substance)	(g/100 g)	≥380 – 420
Tapped density (ISO 787-11)	(g/l)	140 – 180
ALPINE sieve residue > 63μ (ISO 8130-1)	(%)	1 - 10

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The precipitated silica according to Claim 1, which has the following physico-chemical characteristics:

pH (5% in water) (ISO 787-9)		3 – 8
BET surface area (DIN 66131)	(m ² /g)	400 – 600
DBP absorption value (DIN 53601, in relation to dried substance)	(g/100g)	≥380 – 420
Tapped density (ISO 787-11)	(g/l)	100 – 130
ALPINE sieve residue > 63μ (ISO 8130-1)	(%)	0.1 - 1

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A process for manufacturing a precipitated silica according to Claim 1, which comprises:

while stirring water in a vessel with a force sufficient to subject the medium to shear containing water heated to 35°C to 45°C,

a) adding water and sulfuric acid together within at least 100 minutes, to the vessel and maintaining a pH of 6–7, wherein the addition of substances is interrupted for 60 to 120 minutes and when the addition of the substances to the vessel has been completed, a solids content of 36 to 42 g/l remains; and

b) filtering the solid matter, washing the filter cake and subjecting the solid material to a short retention drying process,

wherein the precipitated silica has the following physico-chemical characteristics:

<u>pH (5% in water) (ISO 787-9)</u>	<u>3 – 8</u>
<u>BET surface area (DIN 66131) (m²/g)</u>	<u>400 – 600</u>
<u>DBP absorption value (DIN 53601, in relation to dried substance) (g/100 g)</u>	<u>380 – 420</u>
<u>Tapped density (ISO 787-11) (g/l)</u>	<u>100 – 200</u>
<u>ALPINE sieve residue > 63μ (ISO 8130-1) (%)</u>	<u>0.1 – 40</u>

Claim 6 (Original): The process according to Claim 5, which further comprises conducting a short retention time drying process (c) by liquefying the filter cake to a solids content of less than 18% by weight and spray-drying the resulting suspension.

Claim 7 (Original): The process according to Claim 6, wherein the short retention time drying process in (c) is conducted by drying the filter cake with a spin flash dryer.

Claim 8 (Original): The process according to Claim 6, wherein the silica obtained after the short retention drying process is adjusted to pH 7 to 8 with ammonia gas.

Claim 9 (Original): The process according to Claim 6, wherein the filter cake is washed with diluted sulfuric acid.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): A method of formulating an animal feed, comprising:

combining nutritive feed components of the animal feed with the precipitated silica of Claim 1 as a carrier.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): A method of formulating a vitamin formulation, comprising:

combining vitamin components of the vitamin formulation with the precipitated silica of Claim 1 as a carrier.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A method of formulating a catalyst, comprising:
combining components of the catalyst with the precipitated silica of Claim 1 as a carrier for catalytically active components of the catalyst.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): A method of formulating a free-flowing composition, comprising:

formulating ingredients of the composition with the precipitated silica of Claim 1 which functions as a free-flow or anti-caking agent.

Claim 14 (Original): A method of converting a liquid into powder form, comprising:
combining said liquid with the precipitated silica of Claim 1 as an auxiliary thereby converting the liquid into powder.

Claim 15 (Original): The powder prepared by the method of Claim 14.

Claim 16 (Original): An elastomer containing mixture prepared by combining an elastomer with the precipitated silica of Claim 1.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): A method of manufacturing a catalyst carrier,
comprising:

combining components of the catalyst carrier with the precipitated silica according to
Claim 1.

Claim 18 (Canceled).

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating the subject matter of Claim 18 therein; Claim 18 has been canceled. Claims 2-4 have been amended accordingly. It should be understood that Claim 1 (and claims dependent thereon) have been amended to require that the DBP absorption be **greater than** 380 g/100g. The amended claims contain the symbol " \geq ", because the term ">" is newly added to the claims, and thus under USPTO practice, it had to be underlined. The symbol " \geq " should not be understood to mean "greater than or equal to."

Claim 5 has been amended into independent form.

No new matter has been added by the above amendment. With entry thereof, Claims 1-17 will be pending in the application.